

BAPTIST BULLETIN

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
WEST ACTON BAPTIST CHURCH
JANUARY 2021



Pastor's Word

This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles....Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. – Ephesians 3:1, 7

In our joint worship service on December 28, Pastor Nancy Willbanks of First Baptist Littleton asked us to reflect individually on how 2020 has changed us. It was a good question, and so I put it forth to you now.

What hard circumstances have challenged you, or even brought you low? What silver linings or happy events have altered your perspective this year? How do you perceive daily life differently? Do small yet perfect pleasures affect you more deeply? Do you appreciate fewer commutes? Are you in fact working a more difficult schedule now? Is daily life harder to endure? Do you have a new hobby? How can we help here at West Acton Baptist?

Your answers may vary day to day. Some days may be better than others, and some days may be hard. That is okay; this past year has changed us all. However those changes appear, noticing the change is, in itself, a holy and worthwhile thing. Whether you are weary or frightened or grateful or chugging along—or all three or other things—the presence of Christ is in pausing to look at our and others' transformations. Only when we can see and begin to know a thing can we change it, if indeed we decide we have reason to. Insight is not necessarily curative, but it is sacred.

This coming Sunday, we will be celebrating the Christian feast of Epiphany. In the Greek, the word "epiphany" means "manifestation" or "appearance," as in "showing up" or "the way something looks." Back when the New Testament was written, the word was used to talk about the appearance of dawn, or the appearance of a friend. (You could, in that sense, talk about the "epiphany" of your coffee cup after a prolonged missing stint.) Now we use the word "epiphany" to talk about a sudden intuitive insight, but the original meaning of the word was grounded in physical attributes, in what a noun looks like.

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Preaching Schedule

January 3

Epiphany; Communion

Matthew 2:1-12

Sermon: "Looking for Jesus"

January 10

Baptism of the Lord

Genesis 1:1-5, Mark 1:4-11

Sermon: "Beloved Son"

January 17

Joint Worship with FBC Littleton, WABC hosting

Calling of the Disciples I

John 1:43-51

Sermon: "Under the Fig Tree", Rev. Goodwin

January 24

Calling of the Disciples II

Mark 1:41-20

Sermon: "We're Ditching Dad?!"

January 31

Jesus in the Temple

Mark 1:21-28

Sermon: "I Know Who You Are"

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*(Pastor's Word continued from p.1)*

When Paul received the literal and metaphorical epiphany that caused his conversion to the Jesus Way on the Damascus Road, he was blinded for three days, until he regained his sight and more: the stormy peace of Christ Jesus' story, burning to be told from his perspective. In the ensuing years, he would become a prisoner for the sake of Christ, more than once. The years brought by that epiphany were hard for Paul. All you have to do is read his letters to see that—he's tearing his hair out in some of them. Those years, and that epiphany, changed him, brutally, lethally. And yet, he says, all of it is "according to the gift of God's grace."

The world can be cruel. We can choose to contribute to its cruelty or to press against it, act by act, grace by grace. How this year 2020 has changed us, and what 2021 will bring with its opening door, is a part of God's mysterious working. By God's grace, we will walk that path together.

Pastor Leah

## Attendance Guidelines

If you attend worship in person, You must **follow the guidelines**:

- You **MUST** wear a mask at all times
- If you are sick or think you are coming down with something, **STAY HOME**
- If you have a temperature, **STAY HOME**
- Please sanitize your hands once you enter the church, sanitizer is in the coatroom
- Please sign the sheet in the coatroom that states you were in the church
- You may only use the handicapped bathroom
- Do not enter fellowship hall or the kitchen
- No food or drink
- No hugging
- No singing
- Keep 6 Ft. apart
- Only sit in pews that are not taped off
- Any socialization should be done outside
- Do not touch any of the bible or hymnals
- If you test positive for Covid-19, notify the church ASAP
- **NO** Playground use



# Discipleship Team

**Child Care** - we will be unable to offer childcare during worship until further notice.

**Sunday School** is on hold at the moment, but we may launch an online Zoom class. Please download & print the children's bulletins that are included each week with the Sunday worship information.

**Scripture Readers:** January 3 - Val Nolen, January 10 - Linda O'Neil, January 17 - Lori Bruneau  
January 24 - OPEN, January 31 - Joan Richards

## WABC Women

- All in person activities have been suspended until we feel it is safe to meet.
- We will meet on Zoom for our Annual Women's meeting on Friday, January 8, 2020 at 11am.
- There are ongoing webinars through AB Women's Ministries, information on their website: <https://abwomensministries.org/>.



## Finance Team

Thank you to all who pledged for 2021. **Offering envelopes** will be available following worship on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. If you participate in worship virtually, you may either pick them up safely at the church or they can be mailed to you, just let the office know. **Please note:** Your envelope number is the same as 2020.

We encourage you to use our **Online Giving** link on our website. There are directions on that page of our website during this time of social distancing. You may also mail your pledges to the church. It is very important to keep up with your pledge, especially since we are only receiving limited Building Use fees.

We have received the paperwork from Middlesex Bank stating that our **PPP Loan/Grant** has been forgiven!

We will have our **Annual Financial Meeting** following worship on Sunday, January 24, 2021. Annual Finance Reports will be distributed by January 17, 2021.

## Church Chatter

We have received many **Christmas cards** addressed to the church. They have been uploaded to our website for all of you to see.

**Volunteers Needed** – Are you interested in learning how to run the A/V equipment during worship? Please let the church office know if you are interested. This way we can rotate A/V operators each week.

**TABCOM Church Leadership Day - Mark your calendars for Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>!**

This day will feature great learning opportunities for the leaders of your church. We will have a variety of workshops including Effective Deacon Ministry, Church Safety & Security, Financial Best Practices, and MORE! Several of our workshops will be specifically addressing the challenges of ministry during COVID-19. Details and registration coming from TABCOM soon.

# Mission Team

- As the year 2020 ends and new beginnings are ahead in 2021, let us continue to rejoice in the Lord always! Those of us who survived the challenges so deeply appreciate the outreach of WABC. The Mission Team prays that your spirits were renewed in the quiet moments of the Christmas services on Zoom and in unexpected ways of Christ breaking into the gloom of the pandemic. Continue to pray that each day Jesus is born again in our hearts to renew our faith journeys. Your gifts to the work of Jesus in outreach mission will be highlighted in our Annual Finance Report in January. God has truly blessed us in many unexpected ways.
- A warm and heartfelt congratulation to Valerie Nolen, who has graduated from the **TABCOM School of Ministry** program. Val continues to keep in touch with members via phone calls during the strict regulations. Her friendly, caring voice is so appreciated by many. Let Pastor Leah know if there is anyone wanting a phone visit or would appreciate a call by contacting the church office or leaving a message on the church answering machine.
- WABC is blessed with our pastor, Rev. Leah Goodwin, our Office Administrator Nancy Dodge, our organist Ingrid Eppelsheimer, music director Kathi Gellar and Sexton John Deng. We thank them for their continued commitment to serve WABC, and a donation of \$1,500 has been given to the **Acton Food Pantry** in their honor to help those struggling to put food on the table.
- On December 2, 2020 Ruth Thatcher, Nancy Emerson Lombardo, Linda O'Neil, Jim and Joan Richards helped package up 200 yummy meals of fried chicken with mashed potatoes, corn and dessert in a to-go container. Before the pandemic they might have as many as 90 on evenings to gather for a community meal, but now they are up to providing 200 to go meals to help people during this time of great challenge. Our host team received a compliment that we are very efficient, and the supper staff appreciated our efforts. Ruth Thatcher, WABC's coordinator, will again apply for a grant to continue to help provide the cost of hosting a community supper every three months. We were saddened to learn of the death of Michael Tobia, the founder and director for many years of the **Community Supper** at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church. A huge thank you to Ruth for all her efforts and the members who have helped WABC serve the meals during 2020.
- Thank you for those of you able to support the **Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering** in December. The gift will be submitted in January through TABCOM. The disbursement of the total given last year through ABC-USA has been received by those who served in love and dedication to the ministries and missions where they were called. Prayers of thanksgiving for all the good works of these servants of Christ.
- **HOPE MOUNTAIN, HOPE UNLIMITED, BRAZIL OUTREACH:** Rev. Corenne Smith (remember Jannell Davis went on a Mission Volunteer Trip from WABC at the time). Please continue to pray as they do the Lord's work on Hope Mountain. The Mission Team plus two committed in November to a 30 days prayer, one day at a time for young people who have been brought from the pit of despair and hope to the loving outreach community of Hope Mountain, Brazil. Their pictures and stories came to us via email. Their life experiences we prayed about are heart wrenching and many powerful testimonies to the love of Jesus through their faith journey. Pray for those serving at Hope Mountain where children and staff learn "God dearly loves each child – more deeply than humanly possible."  
*"You are our supporters, and the people who care most about this ministry. If you don't pray, who will? Together, let us raise our voices on behalf of each request!"*  
*Corenne and Philip Smith*  
*Serving with Hope Unlimited in Brazil"*
- Please continue to pray for all who seek salvation in the name of Jesus and for those serving in the mission field wherever they are called and are moved to action.

# Celebrations

## January Birthdays

|                |            |                |            |
|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| John Deng      | January 1  | Zebulon Baxter | January 4  |
| Alice Cummings | January 4  | Kevin Baxter   | January 28 |
| Ty Lamb        | January 29 |                |            |

## January Anniversaries - NONE



# FBC Littleton

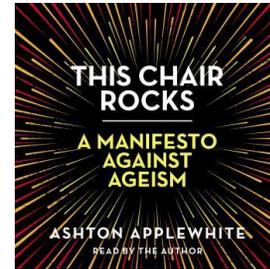
## Common Thursdays

**Jan. 7, 5:45 p.m. Common Thursday: Asking the Hard Questions: How can you make and keep Resolutions: looking at Spiritual and Scientific approaches to change.** (Resources include: *The Willpower Instinct: how self-control works, why it matters, and what you can do to get more of it* by Kelly McGonigal, and other materials about changing habits) Our January theme is Rest and Reset and we'll look at ways that we really want to change or, sigh, need to change for health or other reasons, and how to support successful change both scientifically and spiritually.

**Jan. 21, 5:45 p.m. Common Thursday: Spiritual Practices for handling the Winter Blues.** As we face winter with pandemic restrictions, how do we avoid or handle the Winter Blues? What spiritual practices can help and how do we get the right amount of restorative rest and reset habits that may send us spiraling into the blues?

## Book Group

**Jan. 7, 7:15 p.m. Book Group,** begin reading *This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto against Ageism* by Ashton Applewhite. Check your local library for a copy or purchase it from AmazonSmile.



## Fundraising

This is the time of year we all begin to think about gifts we would like to give others. Here are some excellent opportunities to check off gifts for people on your list while helping your church with fundraising.

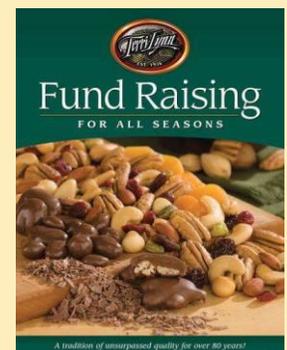
**Coffee** – Coffee makes a great gift!! We place an order for coffee every month. Go to our fundraising page on our [website](#) & fill out the form. The cost is \$11/lb for Regular – Whole/Ground/Medium/Dark and \$12/lb for Decaf Whole/Ground/Medium/Dark. The coffee is Fair Trade & Organic and is roasted & shipped within 24 hours. Our church gets \$3/lb for every pound we sell. Once you taste this coffee, you'll never want anything else. NEXT orders are going in at 9am on **Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup> & February 22<sup>nd</sup>**.



**RADA Cutlery** - We have a continuous internet Fundraiser through RADA Cutlery. Please use this link to purchase items directly from RADA. Share the link with your friends, family & Facebook!! Rada Cutlery is 100% American Made – raw materials and construction and has made & sold over 150,000,000 knives since 1948, earning the reputation for remarkable cutlery, service, and value.

[https://radafundraising.com?rfsn=837262.422f8&utm\\_source=refersion&utm\\_medium=influencers&utm\\_campaign=837262.422f8](https://radafundraising.com?rfsn=837262.422f8&utm_source=refersion&utm_medium=influencers&utm_campaign=837262.422f8)

**Terri Lynn Fundraising** This company ships directly to you so there is no middleman at WABC. We earn 30% of your order. They offer a variety of Nuts, Dried Fruit & Chocolate! The link to begin your shopping is: <https://wabaptistchurch.terrilynn.com/>



**Amazon** - Please link your purchases with AmazonSmile for us to earn a %. Here is the link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/04-6067819>